

accordance with the rules practised by the mediæval artist. The azure firmament of day has its golden sun, its clouds of white, shaded with black, and tinted with yellow, or if tinged with red, as at sunset, usually seen in an atmosphere of pale yellow. The indigo sky of night has its silver moon, and is studded with golden stars, while the black clouds are ever fringed with silvery white. When exceptions occur they are looked upon as portentous and awful, and even the greatest exceptions are but modifications of the rules, which nature rarely contradicts entirely.

The green meadows of spring and early summer are embroidered with flowers, among which white or yellow immensely preponderate. It is not until the strong sun of June has tinged the herbage with gold colour that flowers of blue, red, or purple prevail. In the emerald grass we find the daisy and the buttercup, among the yellow grain the scarlet poppy and the bright blue cornflower.

When nature paints in miniature she adheres to the same rules. Cull the flowers in your garden, and examine them one by one, you will find that when more than one distinct colour occurs in any specimen, one of these colours is certain to be white, yellow, or (though more rarely) black.\* Or, you may find many flowers beautifully damasked with two or more tints of one colour like the diapering in ancient heraldry.†

I do not seek to impugn any existing theory of colour, much less to establish a new one, but I desire to engage your attention to a subject of much importance to British commerce and to British art. Your most extensive means of observation may enable you to test the comprehensiveness and utility of this practice of the ancient decorators, and of the manufacturers of other countries, both civilised and barbarous, and to judge how far an adoption of these rules might benefit those of England. I may be mistaken in my idea of their importance, yet I sometimes imagine, that simple as they are, they really embrace many of the requirements of art. Combinations of yellow, white, and black produce an innumerable variety of tints in undecided greens, and neutral greys,—the most universally diffused of all colours, and these are warmed or cooled to any degree by the addition of the primitives, red or blue.

I take leave to reiterate the remark, that I do not claim the beauty of ancient and mediæval polychromic effects, or of the best specimens of modern manufacturers, to be produced *only* by the peculiar arrangement of colours which I have endeavoured to explain, but I venture to believe that it is one of the means successfully employed for the purpose, and therefore I do not hesitate to advocate its use by the English artisan.

GILBERT J. FRENCH.

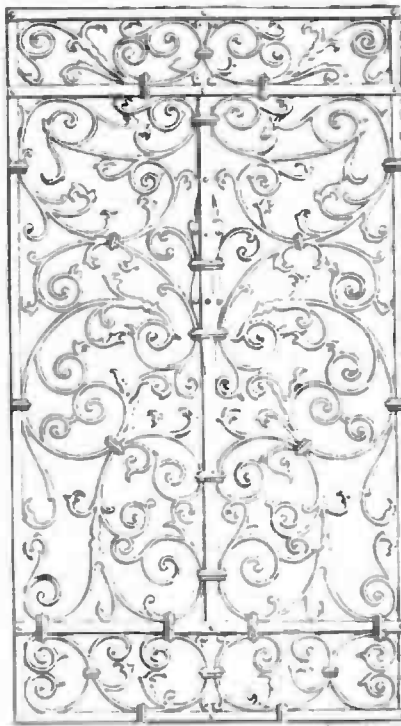
**IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN GLASS.**—A return, moved for by Mr. Richard Spooner, M.P., shows that the total imports of foreign glass in the year 1849 were as follow, viz.:—31,037 cwt. of white or stoned window glass, of one colour only; 90,442 square feet of silver and polished glass; 1,195 feet of painted or otherwise ornamented glass; 38,086 lb. of white flint glass bottles, not cut or engraved; 154,343 lb. of wine glasses, tumblers, and all other white flint glass goods, not cut or otherwise ornamented; 639,967 lb. of all flint cut glass, flint coloured glass, and fancy ornamental glass; and 370 cwt. of glass manufactures not otherwise described. The quantities of British glass exported from this country in the year 1848 were as follow, viz.:—15,296 cwt. of flint glass, 19,708 cwt. of window glass, 49,327 feet of plate glass, 194,755 cwt. of common glass bottles, and 6,965 $\frac{1}{2}$  worth of looking-glasses and mirrors.

\* It is impossible to change the colours of flowers ad libitum, by artificial means, yet the rose, naturally red, may be changed to any shade between red and yellow, red and white, or red and black, but it admits no shade of blue, so also the dahlia, &c. &c.

† The old Dutch painters of flowers mostly worked on a black ground. The value of this arrangement may be easily and pleasantly ascertained by examining natural flowers by the light of a lantern on a dark night. The exquisite beauty of nature's floral gems, when thus exhibited, can scarcely be understood without trial of the experiment.

‡ The value of the neutral greens (if I may so term the tints of black and yellow, without the intermixture of red or blue), was well understood by the old artists in glass, and is agreeably exemplified in many an ancient church window.

## IRON GRILL, STA. MARIA NOVELLA, FLORENCE.



### IRON GRILL, STA. MARIA NOVELLA, FLORENCE.

ALTHOUGH the name and contents of the celebrated Spanish chapel are probably familiar to most of our readers, we question whether the accompanying elaborate iron-work is as well known as it deserves to be. We believe it hitherto unpublished. The pictorial treasures absorb so much of the traveller's attention, that the grills in the windows and iron gates are hardly likely to attract much notice. It is of wrought iron, apparently rather late in style. The variety and richness of these grills in some of the cities of Italy are quite extraordinary: a very interesting collection might be formed of them. We would particularly instance Venice and Florence in this respect. The grill here engraved is drawn to the scale of half an inch to the foot.

### ON CHESTER CATHEDRAL, ITS HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE.

WE proceed to give the substance of Mr. Ashpitel's interesting discourse on the history and architecture of Chester cathedral.

The speaker said, without entering into minute details of what every one knew, it was sufficient for him to state for the information of strangers, that the present cathedral was originally a monastery, and although Chester had been the seat of a bishopric previous to the conquest, it had only been restored to these privileges by the reformation. The chronicle of Henry Bradshaw (Leland's Collectanea, vol. ii., p. 62) stated that Chester was the seat of a cathedral church in the time of King Lucius, the first Christian king of Britain. It is true Bishop Tanner had given a contradiction to this statement, but without authority. The light of Christianity had penetrated where Roman civilization had spread, and he thought it bold to contradict without authority a tradition that bore every trace of probability. However this might be, it was not pretended that the present erection was any part of such cathedral. We learn from the same authority, Bradshaw, the Cestrian monk, before cited, and from the chronicle of John Brompton, Decem Scriptores, p. 810, that St. Werburgh was the daughter, sister, and wife of kings,—that disgusted with the world, she founded a monas-

tery at Ely, which she governed many years, died at Trent, and was buried at the place then called Heanburga, now Hanbury. Her relics, according to both authorities above cited, were removed, for fear of an incursion of the Danes, to Chester, and there re-buried with pomp, a ceremony called usually "the translation of the body."

In 924, according to the MS. chronicle preserved among Bishop Gastrell's Notitia, it is stated that King Athelstane erected a monastery here for secular canons; although William of Malmesbury (fo. 164, n. 30) states there was a monastery for nuns, (as the word "sanctimonialis" is usually translated) "ex antiquo," from a very early period. Whether the word may not mean any monastic person it is not worth while to inquire. Suffice it to say, there was a monastery for regular canons in 1037, when Leofric, Earl of Chester, celebrated in his day, but now better known as the husband of Lady Godiva, the heroine of a very uncertain legend relating to Coventry, came to Chester and repaired the buildings at his own expense. Shortly after this, the greatest political convulsion that ever agitated this land took place—the Norman conquest. Every thing was changed. Arts, commerce, arms, customs, were administered by new hands. Among other changes, the secular, or as we should call them, the parochial clergy, were removed from their possessions, and monks placed there in their stead—a change attempted often before the conquest, but against which the common voice of the English nation strongly revolted. Under their new Norman lords, however, this was done everywhere.

The Conqueror now created his friend and fellow-soldier, the celebrated Hugo D'Avranches, better known as Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester. He followed the example of most of his predecessors—lived a life of the wildest luxury and rapine. At length, falling sick from the consequence of his excesses, he was visited by the celebrated Anselm, the Abbot of Bec, in Normandy, afterwards the Archbishop of Canterbury, who persuaded him, as William of Malmesbury says, to eject the old canons, who he says were very few in number, and who lived in an irregular or improper and beggarly way,—“ejectus inde pauculis clericis qui ibidem fædo et pauperi victu vitam transigebant.” According, however, to the anony-